

Iowa Crops & Weather



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MARCH MELT

Snow and ice began its spring melt during the month of March. Due to wet conditions caused by melting, gravel roads in some areas of Iowa were difficult to traverse. The average depth of **snow cover** for the month of March was 2 inches. **Frost penetration** averaged 5 inches compared to last year's less than 1 inch. **Soil moisture** availability rated zero percent very short, 3 percent short, 64 percent adequate, and 33 percent surplus. **Grain movement** for the state was 23 percent none, 27 percent light, 39 percent moderate, and 11 percent heavy.

Availability of hay and roughage supplies was 26 percent short, 71 percent adequate, and 3 percent surplus. **Quality of hay and roughage supplies** was 10 percent poor, 42 percent fair, and 48 percent good. **Utilization of stubble fields** for grazing rated 53 percent none, 28 percent limited, 16 percent moderate, and 3 percent extensive.

Hog and pig losses in March were 25 percent below average, 71 percent average, and 4 percent above average. **Cattle and calf losses** were 18 percent below average, 72 percent average, and 10 percent above average.

IOWA PRELIMINARY WEATHER SUMMARY, March 2008 Provided by State Climatologist Harry Hillaker

General Summary. Temperatures during March averaged 32.5 degrees or 3.5 degrees colder than normal while precipitation totaled 1.15 inches or 1.06 inches less than normal. This ranks as the 52nd coldest and 33rd driest March among 136 years of state records.

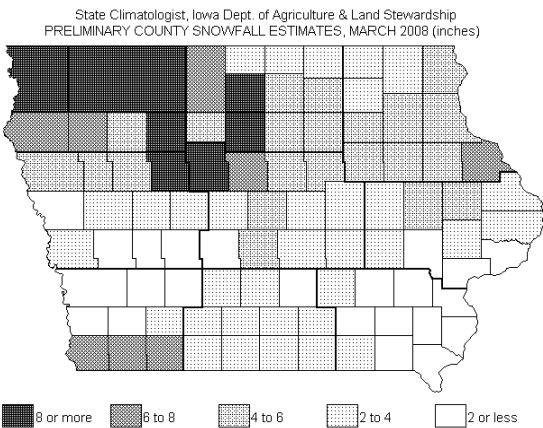
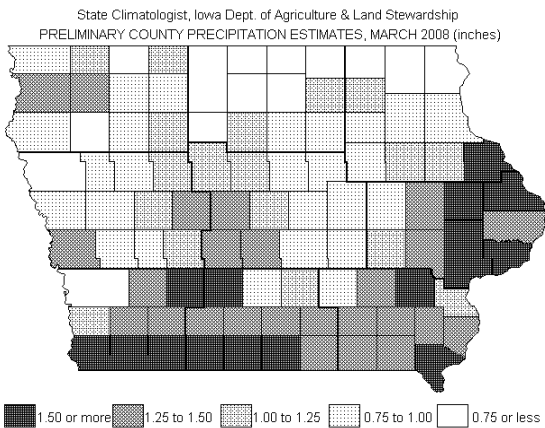
Temperatures. The month began with very welcome mild weather as temperatures reached 74 degrees at Keosauqua on the 2nd. However, the temperature was not to reach 70 degrees again anywhere in the state until the last day of the month when Keosauqua was again the hot spot at 71 degrees. Temperatures averaged below normal each day from the 3rd through the 10th

with subzero temperatures recorded somewhere in Iowa on the 4th, 6th, 7th, 8th and 10th. Cresco and Clarinda reported the month's lowest temperatures with -13 degrees readings on the morning of the 8th. The remainder of March brought near seasonal temperatures with no extended periods of either unusually warm or cold weather. Temperatures for the first one-quarter of the year averaged 22.0 degrees or 4.0 degrees below normal making this the coldest start to the year since 1982.

Heating Degree Day Totals. Home heating requirements, as estimated by heating degree day totals averaged 11 percent greater than normal and 37 percent greater than last March. Thus far this heating season (since July 1, 2007) degree day totals are running 3 percent greater than normal and 9 percent greater than last season at this time.

Precipitation. Iowa entered the month with an extensive and very moisture-rich snowpack over northern areas. However, we were fortunate to avoid any prolonged warm-ups during the month that would have caused a rapid snow melt. Additionally, precipitation was well below normal over most of the state. The result was that snow melt flooding, though widespread, did not reach severe proportions in most areas. Nevertheless, frequent light precipitation events, and cooler than usual weather, kept soils very soggy and made for poor driving conditions on many unpaved roadways. Preliminary precipitation totals varied from 0.43 inches at Swea City to 2.68 inches at Dubuque. Snowfall was frequent during the month, but amounts were mostly on the light side. Preliminary snow totals varied from just 0.3 inches at Washington to 12.0 inches at Sanborn. The statewide average snowfall was 4.1 inches or 0.7 inches less than normal. The preliminary seasonal snowfall total stands at 43.8 inches or 13.3 inches above normal to rank as the 14th snowiest season among 121 years of record.

Severe Weather. The severe weather season often gets started in March. However, the only severe weather reported this month were a few isolated small hail events on the 27th and 31st.



Snow Cover and Frost Penetration for the Month of February

Item	Districts									State	Last Month	Last Year
	NW	NC	NE	WC	C	EC	SW	SC	SE			
	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches	Inches
Snow cover	5	3	3	1	3	0	3	0	0	2	2	0
Frost penetration	13	7	5	8	6	4	1	1	0	5	5	0

February Weather Summary For Iowa Agricultural Statistics Service Prepared by AWIS, Inc.											
STATION	AIR TEMPERATURE				PRECIPITATION			HDD TOT	HDD DFN	DAYS OF 32 COLD	DAYS OF 28 COLD
	HI	LO	AVG	DFN	TOTAL	DFN	DAYS				
	North West District										
Estherville	50	-8	29	-2	0.43	-1.46	9	1,102	32	26	18
Sioux Center	55	-11	32	-3	1.15	-0.73	4	981	33	26	19
Spencer	52	-10	29	-5	0.20	-1.74	5	1,122	120	26	19
Spirit Lake	48	-11	29	-2	0.43	-1.29	4	1,081	221	26	21
North Central District											
Britt	51	-6	28	-7	0.61	-1.27	7	1,147	170	29	25
Humboldt	51	-5	29	-6	0.80	-1.28	10	1,115	131	29	23
Mason City	51	-8	29	-4	0.58	-1.46	10	1,104	77	24	19
Osage	51	-4	28	-6	0.84	-1.31	9	1,141	203	30	22
North East District											
Decorah	52	-11	30	-4	0.49	-1.36	4	1,036	68	27	21
Dubuque	51	-2	30	-5	1.96	-0.97	9	1,081	126	24	20
Elkader	55	-5	29	-7	0.98	-1.20	10	1,123	323	30	28
Fayette	50	-11	28	-6	0.64	-1.51	5	1,126	158	29	25
Waterloo	53	-6	31	-4	0.83	-1.51	7	1,048	108	24	18
West Central District											
Carroll	59	-3	32	-3	1.13	-1.14	10	1,008	70	28	21
Castana	60	-8	33	-5	0.74	-1.43	8	994	22	26	19
Guthrie Center	63	2	33	-4	1.79	-0.70	6	982	88	28	21
Harlan	60	0	34	-4	0.81	-1.34	8	961	17	27	19
Jefferson	60	2	33	-3	1.44	-0.83	9	997	59	29	19
Logan	63	-3	34	-3	1.27	-0.80	6	940	58	29	22
Rockwell City	56	-5	30	-6	1.15	-0.78	9	1,065	153	27	23
Sac City	56	-7	30	-4	0.57	-1.79	5	1,038	61	29	22
Sioux City	60	-4	34	-3	0.75	-1.24	7	951	59	27	15
Central District											
Boone	59	0	31	-5	1.79	-0.57	8	1,037	128	29	23
Des Moines	63	1	36	-2	1.13	-1.25	7	884	39	17	13
Grundy Center	52	0	30	-4	0.77	-1.50	6	1,093	109	28	21
Marshalltown	53	0	32	-4	0.56	-1.87	7	1,020	93	24	16
Newton	58	0	32	-6	0.93	-1.34	8	1,019	146	28	19
Perry	60	3	33	-3	1.48	-0.58	10	989	55	29	18
Toledo	54	-4	30	-6	0.54	-1.76	5	1,087	146	27	22
East Central District											
Cedar Rapids	55	-2	32	-5	1.15	-1.22	8	1,015	114	23	17
Davenport	61	7	36	-2	1.62	-0.68	7	894	34	21	16
Iowa City	59	2	34	-5	1.27	-1.15	5	948	132	21	18
Lowden	58	-4	30	-6	1.80	-0.79	8	1,068	174	29	25
Maquoketa	53	-4	29	-7	1.47	-0.86	8	1,111	179	29	25
Muscatine	68	3	34	-5	1.35	-1.41	4	922	-65	24	18
South West District											
Atlantic	64	3	36	1	1.64	-0.69	6	856	-41	25	17
Clarinda	64	-13	34	-4	2.11	-0.39	8	952	93	27	24
Glenwood	66	3	37	-2	1.27	-0.81	6	873	48	24	20
Red Oak	66	2	36	-4	1.46	-0.85	5	885	95	25	18
Sidney	67	0	37	-3	1.28	-1.07	6	866	52	23	16
South Central District											
Allerton	68	3	35	-3	2.34	-0.02	5	911	-154	29	19
Beaconsfield	65	2	34	-4	1.66	-0.62	5	949	95	25	18
Chariton	64	1	35	-4	1.48	-0.89	5	937	92	28	21
Indianola	64	-3	34	-5	0.73	-1.51	5	967	122	27	18
Leon	69	3	36	-3	1.78	-0.57	6	898	54	28	20
South East District											
Bloomfield	69	4	37	-4	1.25	-1.36	7	872	100	25	14
Burlington	72	8	39	0	1.44	-1.46	7	797	-3	19	14
Ottumwa	64	3	37	-2	1.33	-1.00	9	859	42	19	14
Washington	66	3	35	-6	2.31	-0.08	5	941	0	28	21

Precipitation (rain, melted snow or ice) in inches. Precipitation Days = Days with precipitation of 0.01 inch or more. Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit.
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